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ABSTRACT

This book examines indigenous education in South America, focusing on the development of intercultural education and on an ethnographic study of educational processes and change among the Arakmbut people of the Peruvian Amazon. The Arakmbut are one of seven Harakmbut-speaking peoples who live in the Department of Madre de Dios in southeastern Peru. Since the introduction of primary schooling in the 1950s, Arakmbut children have been exposed to missionary schooling that has denied their language, culture, and learning processes. This situation exists despite developing government advocacy of intercultural bilingual education. Arakmbut traditional teaching practices and learning strategies are exclusively oral. An assessment of the Arakmbut experience of formal education, their attitudes toward schooling, and responses to the proposed introduction of biliteracy considers whether intercultural education based on a biliterate, schooled model can promote indigenous learning practices and transmission of Arakmbut identity. Chapters cover: introduction to the study; indigenous self-determination and intercultural, bilingual, and biliterate education; emergence of intercultural education in Peru; background on the primary school studied and the teachers' situation; relations and communication between community and school; Arakmbut knowledge and worldview; Arakmbut informal learning practices; bilingual education for language maintenance; formal intercultural schooling; and indigenous-controlled intercultural education. (Contains approximately 250 references, an index, Harakmbut and Spanish glossaries, a list of acronyms, maps, and drawings.) (SV)

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